

Promising Practice: Team Meetings

Eastern Gateway Community College

Project HOPE

Mandatory monthly group meetings have been implemented since the inception of Project HOPE, Eastern Gateway Community College's Health Profession Opportunity Grants (HPOG) program, funded by the Administration for Children and Families' Office of Family Assistance. The meetings offer participants the opportunity for peer-to-peer mentoring and support, soft skills training, academic support, and employability skills training.

When the group meetings were started, student coaches were given a list of suitable topics to present at group meetings. Each coach had the flexibility to select a topic relevant to the specific needs of his or her participants.

After administration visited several group meetings, it was clear that some modifications were needed. As a result, in the summer of 2012, Project HOPE staff met numerous times to create content and guidelines for a revised concept: "team meetings."

The "team" theme was correlated with the concept of an athletic team, incorporating fundamentals, skills advancement, preparing for game day, finishing strong, and the victory lap. The team meeting content binder was created and is a living document. Revisions and additions are encouraged as resources are discovered.

In addition, facilitation training was provided for all student coaches. The training included:

- Understanding the group process
- Developing facilitation skills
- Demonstrating the expectations of administration on how a team meeting should be implemented
- Presenting relevant materials and practicing delivery

Ongoing team meeting training is provided at monthly staff meetings.

The new model offers several advantages. Uniformity in delivery across the entire four-county program area facilitates consistency in measurable outcomes. Readily available content for coaches reduces the prep time needed for meetings. The team meeting model features interactive activities for content areas, and it offers steps for creating an inviting, fun atmosphere where participants are celebrated and valued.